

TOWARDS FLEXIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Title and Presenter:

Encouraging team skills through enhancing engagement: the use of peer and self assessment in group work

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Sub Theme & Paper Type:

Flexible Curriculum–Showcase

Abstract:

Group and team work is seen as a key (core/transferrable) skill in graduates – with employers requiring and expecting these to be developed. However, students can be reluctant to engage with this.

Self and peer assessment can provide an effective way of motivating students to take responsibility for their own learning and for their contribution to group activities. These modes of assessment pose a number of challenges for both the teacher and the learner. These include:

- Suitability of the assessment
- Fairness in the marking process
- Transparency in marking criteria
- Practical management issues in handling multiple *marks* for individuals

This presentation will explore some of the above points. In particular, the benefits that can be gained through using a web based peer assessment tool (WebPA) which can facilitate the process, with an emphasis on

- Fairness in the marking process – e.g. allowing students to mark each other in a safe environment (through a web interface which protects the anonymity of individual students' marks of their peers from other students) and allowing the application of a suitable algorithm to apportion contribution based on the student marks;
- Transparency in marking criteria – students use a supplied marking criteria to mark each other. Explaining this helps make students aware of assessment processes;

Practical management issues in handling multiple *marks* for individuals – WebPA offers a tool which can manage this process in an automated way.